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PENNSYLVANIA

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SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

JOINT ECONOMIC

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 26, 2019

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Andrew Wheeler
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Director
Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
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To all concerned:

As you are likely aware, communities in Pennsylvania are working to respond to water contamination associated with the long term use of Aqueous Fire Fighting Foam (AFFF). Specifically, the communities in Bucks and Montgomery Counties surrounding the Former Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Willow Grove and Former Naval Air Warfare Center Warminster have been exposed to high levels of perfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), including PFOA and PFOS in their drinking water. These residents are rightly concerned about the long-term health impacts associated with this water contamination, and have been working with our offices and other public officials in Pennsylvania to better understand the risks to their families, as well as remediate the effects. As a follow up to your agencies' ongoing efforts to work with Pennsylvanian communities affected by PFAS, we write today to request that you, or a designee from your agency, travel to Pennsylvania on a mutually agreeable date to provide a comprehensive update on the work of each of your agencies and how you are working together with the affected communities to address these challenges.

We have pursued a bicameral, bipartisan Congressional effort over the last several years to get answers on the effects of PFOA and PFOS and secure resources for critical remediation efforts. We have advocated for a coordinated health study, with funding from the Department of Defense, to provide clarity on the impact of this exposure on the health of Pennsylvanians. In furtherance of this goal, we joined with a bipartisan group of legislators who worked hard on behalf of these communities to bring about the necessary funding to enable this study to be carried out. In particular, funds were allocated for a multi-state health study authorized in Section 316 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018 (P.L. 115-91), as well as support to help affected


communities carry out remediation projects. This legislation, which passed by an overwhelming majority in both the Senate and House of Representatives, increased funding for the Navy Environmental Restoration and Air Force Environmental Restoration accounts as well as funding to support environmental cleanup with a requirement that the services report on how that money will be used for PFAS contamination cleanup.

We remain concerned about the issues of drinking water contamination facing our constituents. The people of Pennsylvania rightly expect that all of your agencies are working together to address this problem. Unfortunately, we continue to hear that our leaders on the local level are dissatisfied with the level of communication and transparency regarding PFOS and PFOA clean-up, as well as health effects. Accordingly, we believe that all parties would benefit from the opportunity to hear from the responsible federal agencies regarding their plans with respect to PFAS, and we are eager to work with each of you to find a time that is mutually amenable for each of you and for stakeholders in Pennsylvania communities.


Thank you for your attention to this important matter and we look forward to your timely response. Should you have any questions or comments, please contact Valli Sanmugalingam on Senator Casey's staff at valli_sanmugalingam@casey.senate.gov or 202-224-6324.

Sincerely,


ROBERT P. CASEY, JR.
U.S. Senator


PAT TOOMEY
U.S. Senator


BRIAN FITZPATRICK
U.S. Representative


BRENDAN F. BOYLE
U.S. Representative


MADELEINE DEAN
U.S. Representative